

Message Text

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ORIGIN ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 DHA-02 VO-03 INSE-00

ABF-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 SCA-01 /084 R

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APPROVED BY D/HA - JLCARLIN

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INS - SISENSTEIN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 025671

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: ASSYRIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON

REF: (A) STATE 17490 (NOTAL); (B) GENEVA 00538

ATHENS, ROME, AND FRANKFURT FOR INS

1. WE UNDERSTAND UNHCR NEED FOR BEST ESTIMATE AS TO WHAT
PART OF ASSYRIAN/ARMENIAN CASELOAD U.S. PREPARED TO ACCEPT
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AND TIME FRAME IN WHICH THEY CAN BE TAKEN. ALSO APPRECIATE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE FACTORS FOR CARE AND MAINTENANCE FUNDING AT PROPOSED SAFEHAVEN POINTS. IT IS DIFFICULT TO MAKE FIRM PROJECTIONS WITHOUT MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT CASELOAD BUT WE BELIEVE THE FOLLOWING ASSURANCES SHOULD BE ADEQUATE TO SUPPORT A UNHCR DETERMINATION TO MOVE PROMPTLY ON THIS EMERGENCY PROGRAM.

2. INS HAS AGREED TO PROCESS THESE REFUGEES BY ASSIGNING CONDITIONAL ENTRY NUMBERS TO THE HEAD OF FAMILY. DEPENDENTS WOULD THEN BE ASSIGNED NONPREFERENCE NUMBERS WHICH ARE, AT PRESENT, AVAILABLE. 200 CONDITIONAL ENTRY NUMBERS COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THIS PROGRAM IN FEBRUARY AND HOPEFULLY MORE IN MARCH. REQUEST INS ATHENS PROVIDE AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON CASELOAD; HOW MANY FAMILY HEADS?

DEPENDENTS? AND STATE OF PROCESSING; SECURITY CLEARANCE COMPLETED? VISA EAGLE CHECK AND USUAL REENTRY DOCUMENTATION WOULD BE REQUIRED.

3. ALSO REQUEST EMBASSY ATHENS COMMENT ON PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS TO PROCESS NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS FOR DEPENDENTS.

4. WITH RESPECT TO FUNDING, THE FOLLOWING TWO POINTS ARE PERTINENT. AN ESTIMATED ONE QUARTER OF THE U.S. PORTION CASELOAD CONSISTS OF ARMENIANS. THESE QUALIFY FOR USRP FUNDING AND CAN BE SUPPORTED AT SAFEHAVEN POINTS OUT OF SUCH FUNDS WHICH ARE AVAILABLE FOR THIS PURPOSE. (FOR INS ATHENS: WE WOULD GUESS MOST ASSYRIAN APPLICANTS REGISTERED PRIOR TO ARMENIANS. SINCE APPLICANTS MUST BE PROCESSED IN ORDER OF REGISTRATION, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THIS COULD BE CONFIRMED.)

5. THE REMAINDER OF THE FUNDING FOR CARE AND MAINTENANCE AT THE SAFEHAVEN POINTS WOULD HAVE TO BE PROVIDED INITIALLY OUT OF UNHCR EMERGENCY FUNDS. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT 500,000 DOLS WILL NOT BE ADEQUATE TO MEET THIS NEED. WE UNDERSTAND UNHCR POLICY TO LIMIT THE USE OF EMERGENCY FUNDS FOR ANY SINGLE GROUP IN A GIVEN YEAR TO THIS AMOUNT. WE SEE NO RECOGNITION IN REF B, HOWEVER, OF THE FACT THAT REF A CONTAINS A FIRM DEPARTMENTAL COMMITMENT TO REQUEST

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PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION FUNDS TO REPLENISH UNHCR EMERGENCY FUNDS IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL BY THE UNHCR FOR THE SUPPORT OF THIS GROUP OF REFUGEES. WE UNDERSTAND, OF COURSE, THAT THE UNHCR CANNOT TAKE THIS AS A FIRM COMMITMENT. NEVERTHELESS, THE PROBABILITY IS HIGH THAT SUCH REPLENISHMENT FROM U.S. PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION FUNDS WILL IN FACT BE FORTHCOMING. THUS, WE DO NOT

BELIEVE IT JUSTIFIED TO ASSERT "RESPONSE UNCERTAIN IN LIGHT OF CURRENT NUMBER OF SIMILAR APPEALS".

6. WITH REGARD TO TRANSPORTATION COSTS, WE HAVE CONFIRMATION THROUGH JOHN SCHAUER OF CWS THAT FUNDS FOR TRANSPORTATION FOR THIS GROUP OF REFUGEES FROM BEIRUT TO A SAFEHAVEN POINT AND ONWARD TO UNITED STATES AVAILABLE ICEM/WCC REVOLVING FUND.

7. FINALLY, WE FIND THE ALTERNATIVE HESITATIONS IN PARA 7 OF REF B MOST DISTURBING. WHEN THE SITUATION IN LEBANON MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO EXTRACT THIS REFUGEE POPULATION, TIME WAS LOST IN EXPRESSING DOUBT ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF MOVING THESE REFUGEES TO SAFETY. NOW THAT CEASE FIRE IS IN EFFECT THE DOUBT IS EXPRESSED AS TO WHETHER IT MIGHT BE BETTER TO PROCESS DIRECTLY FROM BEIRUT.

WE THINK IT PROFITLESS TO SPECULATE ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT THIS CEASE FIRE WILL HOLD. EITHER WE MOVE PROMPTLY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY OFFERED BY THE CEASE FIRE TO MOVE THESE REFUGEES TO A SAFEHAVEN POINT OR WE MAKE THE DETERMINATION THAT THEY WILL BE PROCESSED DIRECT FROM BEIRUT TO THEIR COUNTRY OF DESTINATION WHENEVER CONDITIONS IN BEIRUT MAKE SUCH PROCESSING POSSIBLE.

8. THE USG POSITION IMPLICIT IN REF A IS TO URGE THE UNHCR TO MOVE PROMPTLY TO REMOVE THESE REFUGEES FROM LEBANON WHENEVER CONDITIONS PERMIT SUCH MOVEMENT, AND TO SUPPORT SUCH A PROGRAM TO THE EXTENT THAT OUR AVAILABLE RESOURCES PERMIT. GIVEN CURRENT UNCERTAIN CONDITIONS IN BEIRUT AND RECENT SHARP REDUCTION IN EMBASSY STAFF, INCLUDING CONSULAR SECTION, WE BELIEVE IT UNWISE GIVE FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO BEIRUT PROCESSING IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

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9. REQUEST MISSION MAKE THESE POINTS URGENTLY TO UNHCR AND REPORT ACTION ASAP. INGERSOLL

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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